

◆ MORE WORK TO DO:

Local citizens should have the final word on public facilities in their communities — especially if they don't stand to benefit directly from these facilities. This philosophy is highlighted in House Bill 2340, which I introduced regarding King County's potential siting of the proposed Brightwater sewage treatment plant in Edmonds or another Snohomish County location.

The goal of this bill is to prevent a city or county from siting such a plant outside its regular service area unless it first obtains local permission and complies with local comprehensive plans. Currently, nothing in state law prevents King County from building a sewage-treatment plant or some other "essential public facility" in Edmonds – outside of its service area.

Local people should have the right and the responsibility to make this sort of decision. Edmonds and Snohomish County have each adopted comprehensive plans. King County should respect these plans.

Along with my 21st District legislative colleagues — Representative Cooper and Senator Paull Shin — I will continue working in the next Legislature for fairness in this state policy.

In addition, I am committed to providing reasonable and living wages for caregivers — men and women who have chosen some of the most important careers in our society. Having personally worked with home-health-care workers, I am committed to ensuring that their wages meet livable standards. There is no doubt that home-health-care workers help to reduce Medicaid expenses while enabling our elderly citizens to stay in their homes around family and familiar surroundings. I will continue to work hard to make sure that home-health-care worker needs are met.

I'm also committed to:

- Continue working on government efficiency and accountability through performance audits and private-public partnerships.
- Make prescription-drug prices more affordable.
- Help small businesses more economically obtain health insurance for their employees.
- Curb the use of illegal drugs by some members of our society — and make our communities safer in the process.

“ACTIONGRAM”

I want to read your thoughts – so just note your thoughts in this space, put it in an envelope, and send it to me as soon as you can!

Dear Brian: _____

Sincerely, _____

Address: _____


Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

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A REPORT ON THE
2002 SESSION

STATE
REPRESENTATIVE
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A REPORT ON THE
2002 SESSION

21ST DISTRICT • SOUTHWEST SNOHOMISH COUNTY

May 2002

Dear Neighbor:

First of all, please allow me to emphasize two key points:

- You're always welcome to contact me whenever you have comments or questions.
- I'm honored to serve as one of your state representatives.

The 2002 session of your Washington State Legislature finished on time. I'm pleased to share this report on our work.

Our main legislative duties were revising the operating budget and assembling a comprehensive transportation plan. Writing a new state budget meant finding a way to fund essential services without putting an even bigger strain on taxpayers. And reaching common ground on a transportation solution was critical to ending traffic — and legislative — gridlock. We simply must keep our economy strong, and jobs here in our community.

This edition of your 21st Legislative District newsletter also reviews specific legislation I worked on during the past session, including efforts to promote fairness and efficiency in government and boost economic competitiveness.

Thank you for reviewing my report on your 2002 Legislature, and please do keep in touch. I need to know what you're thinking so I can more effectively represent our communities! Please don't hesitate to fill out and return the attached "Actiongram" at your convenience.

With every best wish,


Brian Sullivan
State Representative
21st Legislative District

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1-800-635-9993

◆ REVISED OPERATING BUDGET:

As you may recall, I discussed our operating-budget challenge at length in my first legislative report a few months ago. Unfortunately, the budget crisis grew worse during the months that followed.

The national recession hit home in our county and state. Our state budget shortfall increased from about \$1.2 billion in early January to \$1.5 billion by mid-February. Needless to say, bridging our budget deficit proved a difficult task. In addition to the significant shortfall in revenue, the operating budget written last summer underestimated the number of children currently enrolled in our schools, inmates in our prisons, and the rapid rise in health-care expenses increasing costs for all of us. Citizen-approved initiatives supporting school-employee salaries and class-size reductions are *non negotiable*. Moreover, our state has a *constitutional responsibility* to fully fund our schools.

The agreement we reached — *within the two-month time limit and with no increase in general taxes* — eliminates more than 1,500 state-agency positions and cuts spending by more than \$680 million.

The Legislature also tapped available tobacco-settlement money to help maintain funding for critical services.

Also: *Our new capital budget includes funding for the long-sought Edmonds waterfront park — an important project for our region.*

◆ TRANSPORTATION:

Within a week of arriving in Olympia, I cast my first vote for a comprehensive transportation plan. I was proud to co-sponsor House Bill 2304, which seeks not only significant transportation improvements but mandates efficiency and accountability in the process. As the first significant item to reach the governor’s desk, this bill was quickly signed into law.

The new policy adopts important recommendations from the Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation, which was made up of citizens, business leaders, and representatives from labor and the environmental community. The commission invested two years developing strategies to move our roads, highways, bridges, ferries, and other parts of the infrastructure into the 21st century.

This new state policy calls for additional contracting-out for highway-design and construction, and places a renewed emphasis on cost-effective, competitive solutions in both the private and public sectors.

We also approved a proposal that will be appear on the November ballot for a 10-year, \$7.7 billion statewide transportation package. *I want to emphasize that one of my Snohomish County colleagues in the Legislature, Representative Mike Cooper, deserves a great deal of credit for resolving the long impasse on transportation.* Specific projects proposed for our region include:

- The Mukilteo multi-modal transportation facility and the Edmonds Crossing project.
- Improvements to the 196th Street interchange in Lynnwood.
- Additional lanes for Interstate 405 between Lynnwood and Tukwila.
- Additional lanes for State Route 9 in the Clearview area, as well as other improvements for this highway.
- Improvements on Paradise Lake Road to the Snohomish River in the Woodinville area.

- Additional lanes for State Route 527 from 132nd Avenue Southeast to 112th Avenue Southeast in the Silver Lake area.

The goal of this package is to improve highway safety and efficiency. And as importantly, the way we maintain our economic strength is by eliminating traffic gridlock that makes it a challenge to move people and products throughout our region.

A nine-cent increase in the state gas tax — five cents starting next January and four cents the following year — would generate most of the revenue. A 30-percent increase in the gross vehicle-weight fee — half next January and half the following year — and a one-percent sales-tax increase on vehicles starting next January would produce the rest of the revenue.

In addition to a statewide package, the Legislature passed a bill enabling counties in the central Puget Sound to pursue a regional package – to be approved by voters – that will invest in additional local improvements as well as transportation alternatives.

◆ ECONOMY AND JOBS:

Citizens and businesses should know exactly what to expect when dealing with a government agency. The agencies and departments should *work with us*, after all — *not against us!*

I supported a successful bill to streamline the permit process in government. This new state law establishes a Permit Assistance Office administered by the governor’s office. What I want is a system that coordinates permit policies — especially for multi-jurisdictional projects. The office will provide information and coordination for people and businesses.

The work of the governor’s Washington Competitiveness Council led to this measure. Business, labor, and government leaders served on the council.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

BRIAN SULLIVAN

21ST DISTRICT

A REPORT ON THE 2002 SESSION

Also in the theme of government efficiency, I prime-sponsored House Bill 2527, a bill providing local governments greater flexibility in doing relatively small public projects. It has been 15 years since the cost ceiling for bidding on projects was adjusted. *From the standpoint of efficiency, this is truly a common-sense bill.*

I helped steer additional economic-development legislation through the process this session. One bill in particular, House Bill 1005, is aimed at bringing utility services to communities in need by expediting the easement process. The idea is simple: *We need to get public-utility lines into under-served parts of our state.*

Terms of the bill allow easements for nongovernmental utility-service providers on state-owned aquatic lands. The regulatory process should not obstruct a company’s honest efforts to expand or develop in areas where public-utility lines are needed.

I met with Department of Natural Resources officials, as well as power and telecommunications representatives and other stakeholders to get this legislation going. And I worked with a Republican legislator from the Issaquah area in a *bipartisan approach* for a genuine and lasting solution.

A huge victory was also won this year to improve our unemployment-insurance system. This new policy, House Bill 2901, makes our state much more competitive by improving the system for businesses — while retaining the important mission the system must play for affected workers.

This legislation was supported by both Boeing and the unions representing thousands of their employees. It is a win-win for jobs, and for the people of our region.

Further, a number of specific new courses are set toward economic development this year. The Legislature:

- Established a permanent, reliable source of funding for the Community Economic Revitalization Board — a program that works to strengthen our infrastructure and attract high-quality new businesses.
- Authorized revitalization-project financing for local communities.
- Fostered community-renewal projects for depressed regions to create good jobs for low-income citizens.
- Encouraged product-development through implementation of a tax exemption for research firms.
- Authorized collective-bargaining rights for state employees, and — at the same time — placed a bigger emphasis on contracting-out of our state’s services and programs.

◆ CLEAN TECHNOLOGY:

The goal of another bill I sponsored, House Bill 2522, is to protect our environment and air quality while saving money.

Terms of this new law promote the purchase of clean technologies by state agencies, enabling us to build a healthier environment for ourselves and for future generations. The state must write a plan to buy energy-efficient vehicles, as well as develop strategies for economically buying electricity from alternative sources such as wind and solar power.

Hybrid electric vehicles are now commonplace on our roads. Toyota alone sold 25,000 last year. At one of the entrances to Key Arena in Seattle, installation of a solar unit has resulted in a 30-percent cost savings. Furthermore, the use of wind power in our country went up last year by more than 20 percent. Other states are moving forward with plans similar to this new Washington plan that I sponsored.

It is important to note that this new law doesn’t force agencies to buy alternative power if it is more expensive than power from existing sources. Instead, the agencies will review opportunities to team up in purchasing alternative energy.